

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 DHA-02 SY-05 CU-02  
AID-05 PC-01 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01  
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02  
SS-15 USIA-06 A-01 OPR-02 OC-06 CCO-00 USSS-00  
SCA-01 MCT-01 /108 W  
-----151430Z 077715 /46

R 151250Z JUN 77  
FM AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6210  
INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA  
AMCONSUL DURBAN  
AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY GABORONE  
AMEMBASSY MBABANE  
AMEMBASSY MASERU  
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA  
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L JOHANNESBURG 1519

CAPE TOWN ALSO FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: SF, PINS, PINT  
SUBJECT: SSRC DETENTIONS PORTEND VIOLENCE ON JUNE 16TH.

REF: JOHANNESBURG 1500

1. SEVERAL SOURCES FAMILIAR WITH DEVELOPMENTS IN SOWETO HAVE  
ASSERTED THE SECURITY POLICE SWEEP OF SOWETO STUDENTS' REPRESENTATIVE  
COUNCIL (SSRC) LEADERS OVER THE WEEKEND (JUNE 11) HOLDS OMINOUS  
PORTENT FOR JUNE 16TH. ACCORDING TO THESE SOURCES, THE SSRC  
WAS PROVIDING AN "ORGANIZATIONAL LINK" WHEREBY COMMEMORATIVE  
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DEMONSTRATIONS WERE TO BE ORDERLY, WITH STUDENTS ACTING TO  
MINIMIZE THE ROLE OF TSOTSIES (TROUBLEMAKERS). NOW, WITH THE  
SSRC LEADERSHIP LOCKED UP, THE SITUATION WOULD BE "CHAOTIC",  
AND THE POLICE WOULD HAVE TO FACE THE CONSEQUENCES OF A DISORGANIZED  
POPULACE WITH "TSOTSIES PROVOKING A CONFRONTATION".

2. IN ADDITION TO THE TACTICAL PROBLEMS THE POLICE WILL HAVE TO

FACE AS A RESULT OF THE SSRC DETENTIONS, THE MOOD OF THE STUDENTS IN SOWETO APPEARS TO HAVE SHIFTED TO A MORE COMBATIVE ATTITUDE AS A RESULT OF POLICE MEASURES. THE NUMBER OF DAILY INCIDENTS SUCH AS STONING OF BUSES AND SCHOOL RALLIES ATTRACTING UPWARDS OF 900 PEOPLE ARE EVIDENCE OF THIS INCREASINGLY HOSTILE MOOD. VIRTUALLY EVERY REPORT FROM SOWETO INDICATES A "TENSE" ATMOSPHERE.

3. IT IS UNFORTUNATE FOR POLICE CHIEF VISSER THAT THIS SITUATION HAS LANDED IN HIS LAP AFTER THE SECURITY POLICE MADE A MOKERY OUT OF HIS POLICY OF "COOPERATION" WITH THE STUDENT LEADERSHIP. VISSER IS BOUND TO PRESERVE THE PEACE IN SOWETO AND MUST ACT TO CONFINE AND CONFRONT ACTS OF VIOLENCE. EVERY INDICATION SO FAR IS THAT VISSER HAS PLAYED THE SITUATION IN LOW KEY MANNER, KEEPING HIS POLICE BACK (FOR EXAMPLE AT THE SCHOOL RALLIES, HE HAS KEPT POLICE AWAY FROM THE SCHOOL GROUNDS AND ONLY SENT MEN IN TO TAKE DOWN PLACARDS AFTER THE DEMONSTRATIONS DISBANDED). THE REAL CRUNCH COMES ON THURSDAY, HOWEVER WHEN VISSER WILL BE FACED WITH THE FULL BRUNT OF AN EXCITABLE AND, PROBABLY, EMOTIONAL, CROWD. IF WHAT IS LEFT OF THE SOWETO STUDENTS' REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL CAN PULL TOGETHER AND REGROUP IN TIME TO EXERCISE CONTROL OVER THE CROWD, "BLACK STUDENT'S DAY" (THE NAME FOR THE 16TH) MAY STILL BE PEACEFUL. HOWEVER, IF THE "COOPERATIVE" ATTITUDE THE SSRC HAD HELD TOWARD THE POLICE HAS CHANGED, IT CAN HARDLY BE BLAMED.  
KIRBY

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
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**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
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**TAGS:** PINS, PINT, SF, SSRC  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
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